

Steve, Therese, Ann, Francis, Ted, Doug, Valerie K.

R.L. BANKS & ASSOCIATES, INC.

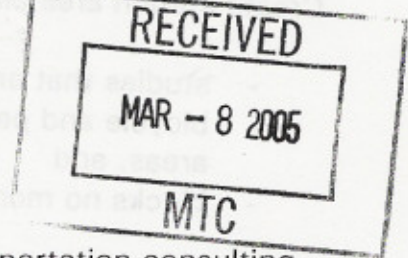


6 Beach Road, #250
Tiburon, CA 94920-0250
415.789.5061 Fax 415.789.5019
rlbasf@aol.com

for response

Joint Policy Committee
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 8th street
Oakland, Ca. 94607

March 8th, 2005



Dear Joint Policy Committee:

R.L. Banks @ Associates, Inc. is a multidisciplinary transportation consulting firm with more than 45 years experience advising scores of public and private clients throughout North America concerning planning and implementing cost-effective passenger and freight transportation services.

We wish to go on the record supporting the MTC and Joint Policy Committee's steps toward connecting land use to transit, but we are concerned the proposed policy will not be effective. We urge you to strengthen the policy by adopting the Livable Communities Platform which will help ensure wise land use around transit stations.

We know that MTC is considering a policy that calls for a certain amount of housing and jobs along transit corridors as a measure for growth. While we applaud the focus on housing we are concerned that the proposed policy leaves too much room for the possibility of poorly planned station areas. Setting a combined threshold for housing and jobs would allow cities to plan for offices and shops only, without sufficient housing. Also, a policy without sufficient land use and design guidelines could allow big-box stores and excessive parking, which would destroy the pedestrian and bicycle environment.

Furthermore, the current proposal does not address the need for housing affordable to families earning low incomes, the very people who use public transit most.

As part of a regional transit-oriented development policy we urge you to adopt the following Livable Communities Platform requiring cities receiving MTC funding for transit expansion projects to have to:

Plan for a high threshold of housing along transit corridors, separate from a jobs threshold;

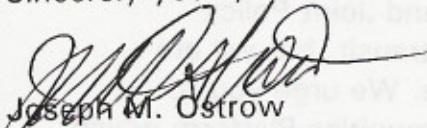
Promote affordable housing in station areas;

Create station area plans that include:

- studies that analyze minimizing the space dedicated to parking,
- bicycle and pedestrian plans for safe routes to and within station areas, and
- blocks no more than 500 feet in length to ensure walkability.

We are eager to support a policy linking transportation funds to transit-supportive land use. We urge you to create a strong and effective policy by including the recommendations above.

Sincerely yours,


Joseph M. Ostrow
Western Region Manager